

COMPLIANCE REVIEW

PRESTON YOUTH CORRECTIONAL FACILITY



Prepared by:

California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation
Office of Audits and Compliance

Final Report

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SECURITY ALARMS AND SOUND MONITORING SYSTEM

Institutions and Camps Branch Manual, Sections 1800, 1816, 1817, and 1822. Youth Authority Manual, Sections 6000, 6105, 6106, and 6115.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Office of Audits and Compliance, Compliance/Peer Review Branch (CPRB) reviewed the Institution and Camps Branch Manual (I&C Manual), Sections 1800, 1816, 1817, 1822, and the Youth Authority Manual (YAM), Sections 6000, 6105, 6106, and 6115 to determine whether Preston Youth Correctional Facility (PYCF) was in compliance with the policies that identify the use and care of Security Alarms and the Sound Monitoring System, also referred to as the Personal Alarm Location System (PALS) or the Actall PALS 9000 Personal Alarm System.

The review period was September 2006 through April 2008. During this period, the CPRB concluded that 252 custody and 288 non-custody staff were assigned a Personal Mobile Transmitter (PMT). The CPRB randomly selected a five percent sample of 12 custody, and 14 non-custody staff to test their PMTs. In addition to testing the PMTs, the CPRB reviewed 26 of the 540 (5 percent) staff training records in the institution's Training Information Management System (TIMS).

The CPRB determined that PYCF is not in compliance with the I&C Manual, Sections 1816 through 1818 and YAM, Sections 6115 and 6117.

In summary, the findings are as follows:

- Inadequate maintenance, failure to test, and inattentive to the PMTs;
- Improper usage of the lapel reader with the PMT;
- Outdated PYCF policy and procedures;
- Staff not receiving annual PALS training;
- No written procedures to replace batteries in the PMTs; and
- Incomplete or missing PALS training records.

BACKGROUND

The Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) implemented the PALS due to the previous alarm system being unavailable for defective parts replacement. Additionally, the PALS improved technology and allowed the control center to determine the PMT wearer's exact location.

The Southern Youth Correctional Reception Center and Clinic was the first facility to receive the PALS, and DeWitt Nelson Youth Correctional Facility was the last facility to receive the PALS.

On January 24, 2007, the Director of the Division of Juvenile Facilities issued a memorandum directing the superintendent of each facility to designate a specific staff to monitor the Actall PALS 9000 Personal Alarm System. The designated staff will be involved in monthly meetings, conference calls, and report system challenges and solutions to DJJ Headquarters.

Currently, the Actall PALS 9000 Personal Alarm System is installed at all DJJ facilities. PYCF implemented the PALS on September 13, 2006. PYCF has a lieutenant designated to conduct all programming of the PMT's. The lieutenant has assistance from a sergeant and a youth correctional officer. Plant Operations is responsible for repairing the Infrared Transmitters (IRT), and Radio Frequency Locators (RFL). The IRTs and RFLs identify staff's exact location.

In order for PALS to work efficiently, it is essential that all staff check their alarms daily. Staff must wear a lapel reader when the PMT is at risk of being covered by clothing. Wearing the lapel reader allows the IRTs and RFLs to pick up the staff's location accurately. If staff cover the PMT and move to a different location, the IRTs and RFLs may not give an exact location. Staff must acknowledge the beeps when they enter a new location, or the PALS will report an inaccurate location.

When an alarm is activated in a building, the IRTs send the location to the RFLs, which send the information to the Control Center Crisis Monitor. The RFLs are mounted on buildings throughout the facility. When an alarm is activated outside, the RFLs send the location of the staff to the Control Center Crisis Monitor.

The objectives of the review were to determine whether:

- PYCF has an operational manual detailing institutional safety, security, policies, and procedures. Updates are maintained on an ongoing basis;
- The interior and perimeter of PYCF is monitored by the security alarm system;
- The PALS is able to identify the location of staff;
- The PALS is able to ensure an appropriate response;

- Employees are trained in the proper use and care of personal alarm devices;
- PYCF has established procedures to ensure timely replacement of batteries in personal alarm devices;
- PYCF has a plan to permit a limited continuation program operation, in the event of failure to the security sound system; and
- Employees are testing their PMTs daily.

The CPRB determined whether the objectives were met by reviewing:

- I&C Manual Sections 1800, 1816, 1817, and 1822;
- YAM Section 6000, 6105, 6106, and 6115;
- Memorandum from the Director of the Division of Juvenile Facilities dated January 24, 2007, pertaining to Actall PALS 9000 Personal Alarm System;
- Local memorandums regarding PALS;
- Information obtained from interviewing staff members that are responsible for monitoring the Actall PALS 9000 Personal Alarm System;
- Training records and materials;
- TIMS;
- Facilities operational manuals;
- Security alarm system; and
- Staff Safety Evaluation dated July 12 through 15, 2005, prepared by the Corrections Standards Authority of PYCF.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Finding I: Inadequate maintenance, failure to test, and inattentive to the PMT's.

The CPRB randomly selected 14 non-custody staff from education and the program center to test their PMTs. 2 out of 14 (14 percent) non-custody staff's PMT failed to activate after the panic alarm was pushed. Specifically, two clerical staff's panic alarms failed to activate in the program center. One activated after the third attempt of pushing the panic button. The other PMT activated after the battery was replaced.

The CPRB randomly selected twelve custody staff to test their PMTs from the following lodges: Cedar, Buckeye, Evergreen, and Greenbrier. 1 out of 12 (8 percent) custody staff's PMT failed to activate after the panic alarm was pushed. The failure was attributed to a low battery and after the battery was replaced the PMT functioned properly.

The CPRB observed custody and non-custody staff as they entered the facility to determine whether they were testing their PMT. 12 out of 15 (80 percent) custody staff failed to test their PMT, and 12 out of 18 (66 percent) non-custody staff failed to test their PMT upon entry to PYCF. The non-custody staff was comprised of medical, educational, and clerical.

The CPRB observed staff not being attentive to the cues of the PMT when they change location. When staff enters a new location, the staff should hear a beep, which indicates the PMT is operating correctly. The IRTs are located on the ceiling area of buildings and must be able to detect the PMT.

Criteria:

I&C Manual, Section 1818, states: "All employees shall be trained in the proper use and care of personal alarm devices."

The PYCF PALS Training Document states: "Staff will test their PMT as they enter the institution."

Below are the steps outlined in the PYCF PALS training document:

- Step 1: Insert the PMT upright and hold for one second and listen for the beep.
- Step 2: Press the red PMT button and hold for several seconds. Make sure your finger does not cover the plastic transparent covering next to the red PMT button.
- Step 3: Watch for the green light on the box to come on.
- Step 4: If a green light does not appear, remove the PMT, wait one minute and repeat steps 1 through 3.
- Step 5: If the second attempt fails, notify Main Control of the failure."

Recommendations:

Establish a procedure to ensure that all staff test their PMT's daily.

Incorporate the procedure into the PYCF Policy and Procedures Manual, Section 3010.

Finding II: Improper usage of the lapel reader with the PMT.

While conducting the PMT testing portion of the review, the CPRB found that staff were not wearing the lapel reader and/or had clothing on that covered the device. If the PMT is covered by clothing or something else, the IRTs and RFLs will indicate the last location that was transmitted by the PMT. For example, the Control Center Crisis Monitor showed an alarm activated in the Outpatient Housing Unit when the staff was in the auditorium for training. The PALS did not indicate the correct location due to the PMT being covered by the staff's garment. After conducting interviews with various staff, the CPRB determined the PMT cannot be covered in any way in order to pick up accurate transmissions of staff's location.

Criteria:

The PYCF PALS training document states: "All staff will be issued a PMT carrying case, lapel reader and break-away necklace. Note: Lapel reader will be worn outside garments whenever clothing covers the PMT."

Recommendation:

Require staff members to wear the lapel reader or break-away necklace.

Finding III: Outdated PYCF Policy and Procedures.

The PYCF Policy and Procedures Manual, Section 3010 has not been updated since the implementation of PALS in September 2006.

Criteria:

I&C Manual, Section 1816, states: "Each facility shall have an operations manual detailing institutional safety and security policies and procedures that are updated on an ongoing basis."

Recommendation:

Update PYCF Policy and Procedures Manual to include PALS.

Finding IV: Staff not receiving Annual PALS training.

PYCF had a total of 540 staff training records, 26 were selected for review. From the records reviewed, the CPRB determined the following: From the implementation of the PALS system in September 2006 until the date of this review, 13 out of 14 (93 percent)

non-custody staff, and 5 out of 12 (42 percent) custody staff did not receive additional PALS training.

Criteria:

I&C Manual, Section 1822, states: "Superintendents are responsible for developing a system that assures staff knowledge of safety and security policies and procedures."

I&C Manual, Section 1822, state: "Every DJJ institution shall identify those skills required to safely carry out the operational procedures within that institution. These procedures shall ensure that all employees receive proper orientation and training in these skills."

I&C Manual, Section 1817, states: "Staff, visitors, and volunteers working within the security area of an institution shall be trained in the use of, and carry on their person, a personal alarm device."

I&C Manual, Section 1822, states: "All employees shall be trained in the proper use and care of personal alarm devices."

YAM, Section 6117, indicates: "Site training officers work with site administrators to conduct the training activities of the site. These activities include needs assessments, training, planning, scheduling, training delivery, coordination, documentation of training received, monitoring of training mandates, and the implementation of training plans."

PYCF Security Orientation Employee Check List.

Recommendations:

Supervisors monitor training completion of their staff.

Supervisors monitor yearly completion of block training for all staff members. (Clerical, education, maintenance, and peace officers, etc).

The scheduler will develop a system to ensure staff receives yearly training in a timely manner.

Finding V: No written procedures to replace batteries in the PMT's.

The CPRB did not find any procedures relating to the replacement of batteries in the PMT's.

After interviewing the PALS Coordinator and reviewing PYCF's Operational Manual, the CPRB determined that PYCF does not have a written procedure pertaining to the replacement of batteries in the PMT's.

The PYCF PALS training document states: "Staff/volunteers/visitors are not allowed to change the PMT battery or alter the PMT in any way; to do so may place you or other staff/volunteers/visitors at risk."

Criteria:

I&C Manual, Section 1818, states: "Each facility shall establish procedures to ensure timely replacement of batteries in personal alarm devices."

Recommendations:

Develop written procedures for battery replacement in the PMT's

Incorporate the procedure into PYCF's Policy and Procedures Manual, Section 3010.

Finding VI: Incomplete or missing PALS training records.

The CPRB did not find any documentation in the TIMS indicating that staff was trained on the PALS system in September 2006. After reviewing 26 out of 540 (5 percent) staff training records, 3 of the 26 (12 percent) training documents reviewed did not have the date that staff signed the document. Even though staff received initial training, there was no documentation in the TIMS pertaining to the initial PALS training.

Criteria:

YAM, Section 6115, states: "Every Youth Authority (YA) branch shall assign staff to work in conjunction with the Training Services Division to coordinate all training needs of all assigned staff, Branch Training Coordinators shall ensure that all training is documented on form YA 5.701 (Request to Attend Training) or YA 5.706 (In-Service Training/YA Roster) and recorded in the departmental TIMS."

Recommendation:

Place training documentation in the TIMS.

Review of Security Alarms and Sound Monitoring System

PRESTON YOUTH CORRECTIONAL FACILITY

GLOSSARY

CPRB	Compliance Peer Review Branch
DJJ	Division of Juvenile Justice
I&C Manual	Institutions and Camps Branch Manual
IRT	Infrared Transmitter
PALS	Personal Alarm Location System
PMT	Personal Mobile Transmitter
PYCF	Preston Youth Correctional Facility
RFL	Radio Frequency Locator
TIMS	Training Information Management System
YA	Youth Authority
YAM	Youth Authority Manual